

Audley End

ESSEX

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AUDLEY END

A CATALOGUE OF THE PICTURES IN THE STATE ROOMS

by R. J. B. WALKER, M.A.

Details of the pictures in the order of their hanging in the state rooms with descriptions of the subjects and the artists. An index and Genealogical Table are included.

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MINISTRY OF WORKS
ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Audley End

ESSEX

by

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History

AUDLEY END is one of the most famous of the many stately houses which have been the glory of the English countryside for the past four hundred years. Like their medieval predecessors, the castles, they are or were the centres of large estates with a complicated organisation of tenants and servants revolving round them. But, whereas castles were built when the owner had often to keep in mind the danger of armed attack, in the mansion the noble lord or other owner could give his undivided attention to the arts of peace. It is indeed to these lords that the country owes, not only many a fine house, but also much which is now admired in wood and field. For it should always be remembered that in its present form the English countryside is not a work of nature, but a product of the hand of man. That man, more often than not, was the local squire.

The house is not as old as the name which it bears. The latter commemorates Sir Thomas Audley, from 1529 to 1535 Speaker of the Parliament which passed the Acts for the Suppression of the Monasteries. Amongst the gifts with which King Henry VIII rewarded him for this and other services was the Abbey of Walden, which lay near the present house, i.e. towards the western end of the town of Saffron Walden. There are no remains standing of the abbey, which was of the Benedictine order, nor of the first Audley End, which Sir Thomas built. He was later created Lord Audley of Walden and remained in royal favour until his death in 1544. His tomb, a noteworthy one in black marble, may be seen in Saffron Walden church.

Lord Audley's property, including the land on which the later house was built, in due course descended to Thomas Howard, son of the fourth duke of Norfolk, who was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1572. Tom Howard commanded a ship in the fleet which defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588, and was knighted for his gallantry in the action. Continuing to distinguish himself at sea, Queen Elizabeth in 1597 made him Baron Howard of Walden and a Knight of the Garter the following year.

His father had been beheaded for intriguing with Mary, Queen of Scots. It is, therefore, not surprising that when, in 1601, Mary's son, James, ascended the English throne as James I, he set himself to make atonement to the family of the dead duke. Lord Howard was created earl of Suffolk and made Lord Chamberlain, and later, in 1614, became Lord High Treasurer of England. In 1605, as Lord Chamberlain, he

was largely responsible for the discovery in the vaults of the House of Peers of the combustibles prepared for the Gunpowder Plot.

The declining years of the earl were marred by charges of embezzlement. In 1618 he was deprived of his office, committed to the Tower of London, and after trial fined £30,000. Public opinion at the time attributed his fall to the activities of Catherine Knevit, a celebrated beauty, whom he married after the death of his first wife. It seems to have been notorious that she extorted money from those who had business at the Treasury in return for using her influence with her husband in their favour. He, in turn, was excessively indulgent to his family, who repaid him by causing his disgrace.

It was the earl of Suffolk who built the great Audley End. All records of its erection have been lost; indeed it has been stated that they were deliberately destroyed. It is supposed to have been begun in 1603, the year of James I's accession, and to have taken thirteen years to build. Similarly the cost must remain a matter of conjecture, although it was rumoured that Suffolk told the King that the whole building, with its furniture, cost £200,000. For modern reckoning this figure should be multiplied by 40. It is small wonder that King James is said to have remarked that the house was too large for a King, though it might do for a Lord Treasurer. In view of the circumstances of the earl's disgrace not long afterwards the King's remark may well have been true, even if apocryphal.

In order to appreciate the remark to the full, one must realise that the house, when complete, was vastly bigger than the present mansion. It completely enclosed two square courtyards. From drawings of the house which were made before parts were demolished, it is possible to visualise the appearance of the building in its prime.

It was approached from the west by means of a bridge over the river Cam and along an avenue, flanked by two rows of lime trees, to a grand entrance gateway with four circular towers. The main rooms on the north and south sides of the principal or western court were on the first floor, built over an open piazza or walk and supported on columns of alabaster. On the eastern side of this court there was a terrace of slight elevation, parallel with the present Hall. Beyond the Hall was the inner court, which was completely enclosed with ranges of rooms. Of this house only three sides of the inner court remain, the whole of the outer court and the eastern side of the inner court having been demolished.

The design of the house has been attributed with some probability to the architect John Thorpe. It is also said that the earl of Suffolk, who built it, spent £500 on a wooden model from Italy, some portions of which were still in the house in 1836. Certainly it is based upon

Italian prototypes, as was usual at the time of its erection. But the 17th century was a time of rather rapid transition in England from medieval to modern ideas, and as early as 1654, John Evelyn, the diarist, could describe it as 'a mixt fabrick, twixt antiq and modern'. By his day mansions of a very different character were the fashion, buildings no longer medieval in their layout, but of a kind which have persisted until our own day.

Since the 17th century the house has been the subject of much demolition and subsequent restoration and even partial rebuilding. As a result there is now little to be seen of the original structure. The two porches and some of the walling of the Hall date from the 17th century, as do the arches and columns on the ground floor of the south side of the south wing, but otherwise there is nothing whatever left of the building of the earl of Suffolk. Internally the only works of his time still in position in the rooms which are open to the public are the wooden screen in the Hall and the stone arcade just to the north of it, as well as the two doorways in the east wall of the Hall and the ceiling and chimney-piece in the Saloon. Everything else, whatever its style, dates from the 18th or early 19th century. One of the noteworthy features of Audley End is that successive owners almost without exception have taken care to ensure that their own work should harmonise with the original 17th-century features. They succeeded so well that at first sight the new work may often be mistaken for the old.

The earl of Suffolk, although disgraced, continued to live at Audley End until his death in 1626. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Theophilus, who died in 1640 after some years of ill-health. James, the eldest son of Theophilus, succeeded as the third earl. He found the estate sadly encumbered with debts, but continued to live in the house. He took little part in the Civil War between King and Parliament, and contrived to keep his property during the Commonwealth, living in privacy at Audley End. Nevertheless he remained in favour with Charles II after the Restoration in 1660.

The King indeed took a fancy to the house. The Royal residences had suffered severe damage during the Civil War and Commonwealth, and Charles required another palace. After three or four years of negotiations Lord Suffolk sold Audley End to the King in 1669 for £50,000. By the following year the Court was established at what was then called the New Palace, and it remained in occasional use by successive Sovereigns until 1701, when it was conveyed back again to its former family in the person of Henry, fifth earl of Suffolk, in lieu of the balance of the purchase money.

There seem to be no structural features in the house to illustrate this royal occupation except a few rainwater heads, three of the time of

James II and one of the reign of William and Mary. This period is, however, notable for the fact that the Clerk of Works, under the Surveyor General of Works, Christopher Wren, was Henry Winstanley, a man who took the trouble to record by plans and views the aspect of the Audley End in his day. In view of subsequent work at the house Winstanley's views are invaluable. They show not only what was the appearance of the vast building in its prime, but also that the restorers of the 18th century faithfully copied the old features and so preserved the general appearance of a Stuart mansion.

The house had now been in existence for nearly a century. Grandiose from the beginning, it is clear that after the time of its builder it had hardly ever been used to the full in a manner commensurate with its size. The maintenance of so gigantic a structure would tax the resources of any family, however wealthy. But now, in the early 18th century, the family itself began to fail. Between 1690 and 1745, when the line failed with the death, childless and intestate, of the tenth earl, there were no less than seven holders of the title.

In about 1721 the eighth earl consulted the architect Sir John Vanbrugh, and by his advice three sides of the great outer or western courtyard were demolished. Other buildings which housed the Kitchen, Chapel, etc. were also demolished at the same time or soon after, so that by the time of the last earl of Suffolk to reside in the house all that remained was the complete inner court.

At the same time Vanbrugh made a few additions or alterations in the part of the house which was left standing. In place of the southern wall of the Hall, which up to that time had been solid except for a doorway at the eastern end, he built a stone arcade of two tiers with three arches in each. From this arcade two flights of stairs with gilt iron balustrades were also constructed at this time, as is evident from the form of the ironwork. It is, however, interesting to note that in the arcade Vanbrugh, no doubt under instruction from his client, faithfully copied detail of a century earlier. The plaster ceiling above he made in the manner of the Stuarts of the early 17th century, who delighted in wide strap-work, but he made the shape of the straps to include the same broken curve as may be seen in the balustrade, and his decoration within the strap-work is purely of 18th-century style. This is the earliest example in Audley End of the conscious copying of old *motifs*, which constantly recurs in the house.

In 1747, after complicated legal proceedings, the house and park were acquired by Lady Portsmouth. The building was becoming very dilapidated and its total demolition was at one time under consideration. Lady Portsmouth, in her desire to adapt the house for the use of her nephew and successor, finally listened to the advice of a firm of London

builders, and ordered the demolition of the eastern range of buildings. This was in or shortly after 1749. But it was very soon found that this was a mistaken policy. The eastern range had contained a long gallery, which was not only a very fine room, but also was a means of communication between the north and south ranges of buildings. With the gallery no longer in existence, another means of access was needed. By 1762, when Lady Portsmouth died, an open arcade had been built beside the east wall of the Hall, to provide this access, and the broken eastern ends of the north and south wings had been finished off by means of single-storey buildings, ending in bay windows.

Lady Portsmouth bequeathed all her possessions to her nephew, Sir John Griffin Whitwell, on condition that he changed his name to Sir John Griffin Griffin. This he did. He had a distinguished military career, eventually becoming a Field Marshal. In 1784 he succeeded to the barony of Howard de Walden, and in 1788 was created Baron Braybrooke. He died in 1797.

Lord Braybrooke, or Lord Howard as he was usually called, was the creator of Audley End as it is seen to-day. He is said to have spent £100,000 on the building in days when such a figure was worth far more than it is now. Immediately after inheriting the property he built the gallery and the passage above it on the second floor beside the east wall of the Hall; this was done by 1765. He may also have repaired the stonework of the western side of the Hall, because there is a rainwater-head dated 1766 beside the north porch. At about the same time he had the living suite on the ground floor of the south wing redecorated by Robert Adam. Besides the rooms still visible this suite included a Library in the bay at the end of the wing, but the decoration no longer exists and the room was subdivided when the books were transferred to the new Library on the first floor.

About twenty years later Lord Braybrooke did a great deal more to the building. Much of the external stonework was replaced with new, including all the window jambs, sills, lintels and mullions. In these, as also in the balustrades at the top of the walls, great pains were taken to imitate the old work in form, if not always in exact detail. Careful scrutiny will show minute differences, but the general effect is the same as that given by the old work. That is why Audley End still gives the appearance of being an early 17th-century building, although in fact almost every part of it now visible dates from the late 18th century or later.

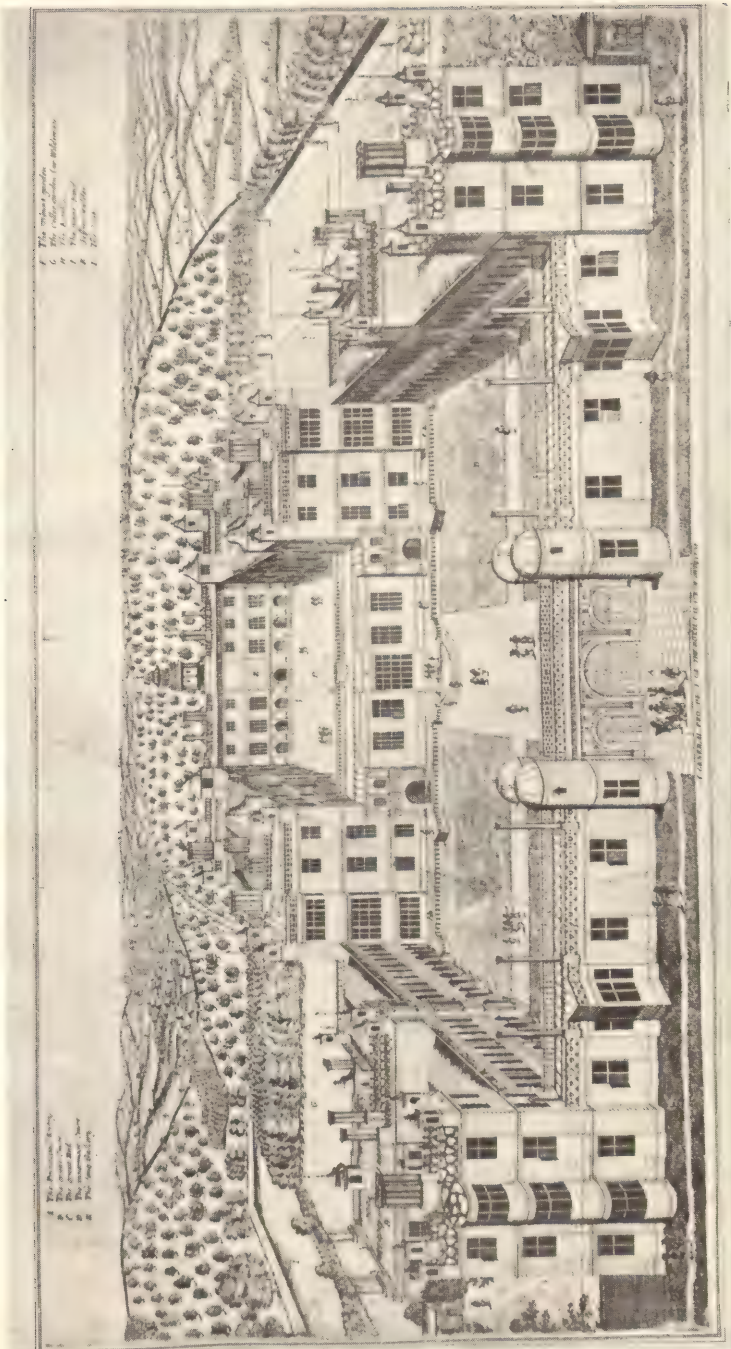
The apartment known as the Saloon was at this time quite transformed in character. The date of the work, 1785, appears above the main door in the north end, and in the northernmost panel of the west wall there is an inscription recording the fact that this room was

then refitted. It implies that the ceiling was in no way affected. The other decoration is composed of copies of various types of ornament to be found in earlier work in the house, but it is differently executed and could not be confused with genuine work of the 17th century. Moreover the clusters of three columns beside each of the painted panels are unmistakable examples of late 18th-century or 'Strawberry Hill' Gothic, a style in use for the whole of the Chapel, which was complete by November 1786.

Other work was done at the same time, such as the embellishment of the bedrooms on the first floor of the south wing, and the completion of the bay windows at the eastern ends of the two wings, as they exist now.

As the first Lord Braybrooke had no children, his property and title passed to Richard Aldworth Neville, his kinsman. In 1825, he in turn was succeeded by his son, Richard Neville, the third Lord Braybrooke. These two possessors of Audley End were responsible for the final embellishment of the house. Begun at the end of the life of the second Lord Braybrooke, and continued by his son, the work involved the complete interchange of ground and first floor apartments in the south wing. Instead of a dining-room, drawing-rooms, and library on the ground floor with Saloon and bedrooms on the first floor, there were now dining-room, drawing-room, and libraries beside the Saloon on the first floor with bedrooms below. The reason for this change is not stated by the third Lord Braybrooke, who completed it and wrote a most informative and discriminating book on the house, but it may have been carried out in order that all the principal rooms should range with the Saloon on one floor. The rooms on the first floor are also, of course, much loftier and have a better prospect than those below.

The present Library was fitted between 1820 and 1825, as is indicated by plans still in the house, and similarity of treatment in the ceilings shows that the dining-room, drawing-room, and south library belong to the same scheme. Some of the plaster work in the eastern part of the dining-room may be of somewhat earlier date, and the chimney-piece in the Library is a genuine early 17th-century work, taken from the north wing. But it has white and gold paint and coloured embellishments which date from 1825 or later. On the other hand the chimney-pieces in the dining-room are imitations of 17th-century work and must have been fitted with royal arms to commemorate the sovereigns who once possessed the house. Throughout the house there is evidence of infinite care to rebuild and embellish it in a manner which is in keeping with the original work, and the inscription in the Saloon gives the reason, namely gratitude to those ancestors from whom the family derived its possessions.

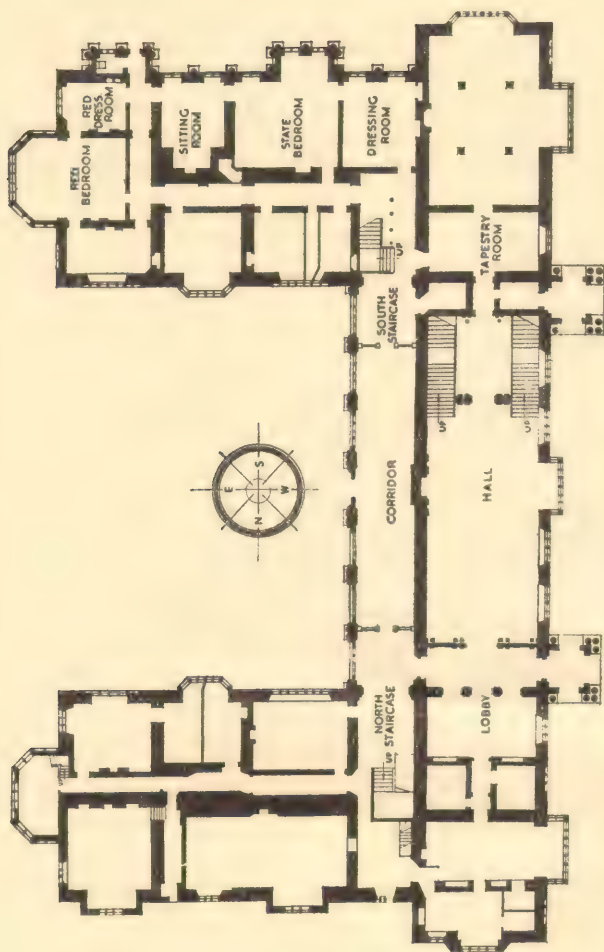


Winstanley's view of Audley End, 1676
 by permission of the Honourable Robin Neville



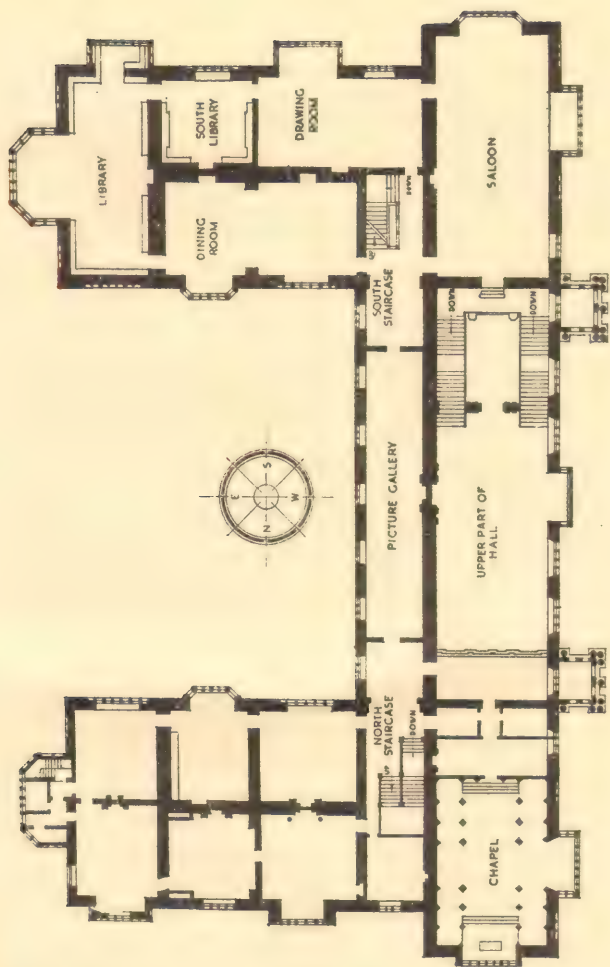
The Screen in the Hall, Audley End

Of later work there is little. The arcade along the east side of the Hall was filled in about 1865 and the chimney-piece in the gallery above dates from about the same time. The house was the residence of the Lords Braybrooke until the death of the seventh Lord Braybrooke in 1941. It is now the property of the nation and is vested in the Ministry of Works. The pictures, furniture and other contents belong to the Hon. Robin Neville, who has been kind enough to leave them in the rooms for the pleasure of visitors. He has also presented most of the historic archives of the estate to the Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, where students who desire to consult them will be welcomed.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE OF FEET



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE OF FEET

Description

Although built at the time of transition from medieval to modern styles in planning, and subjected since that time to alterations, Audley End yet retains much of the appearance of a medieval house. It has been mentioned that John Evelyn, the diarist, in 1654 described it as 'a mixt fabrick, twixt antiq and modern'. So indeed it was, not only in his day, but even at the time it was built. The original ornament which survives is Renaissance in style. So were the colonnades of the outer court, long since demolished. Yet the plan of the main house was, and in part still is, purely medieval. Other houses of the early 17th century, like Holland House in London, were then being built in a new style without a great Hall, but Audley End has its Hall, its Screen, Gallery and Passage, precisely as have many houses two or three centuries earlier in date.

The existence of two entrance porches is unusual. They are both original and their decorative *motifs* and doors are notable examples of their kind. The southern porch was designed to give quick access to the high table in the Hall by means of a passage behind it, but the later addition of the stone stair at the southern end of the Hall caused its disuse. In the east wall of the Hall, however, there is still the doorway which answered to this porch, just as there is a doorway in the same wall opposite to the northern porch.

Lobby

Visitors now assemble in a lobby immediately north of the Hall. The arcade here is original, i.e. early 17th-century work, and the lobby is but an enlarged version of the screens passage normal at the lower end of all medieval halls. From it there originally was a passage to the kitchen, buttery and pantry but the original dispositions of this part of the house cannot now be traced and the north wall of the lobby has been altered.

The lobby is sparsely furnished, but visitors should note the mahogany side-table, carved with flutes and paterae in the Adam style, which stands in the window embrasure. From the ceiling hang a number of leather fire buckets dated 1833 and painted with Lord Braybrooke's initial and coronet. On the east wall hangs Winstanley's engraving of 'The Royal Palace of Audley End' in 1676. Henry Winstanley of Littlebury, better known as the designer of the original Eddystone Lighthouse, was clerk

of the works at Audley End to Charles II and James II and in 1688 he published a set of twenty-four plans and views of Audley End, dedicated to James II, the Earl of Suffolk and Sir Christopher Wren.

Hall

It is difficult now to visualise the proportions and appearance of the Hall when first built because of the alterations made early in the 18th century, when the staircase was added at the southern end. The great screen at the northern end is one of the most elaborate of its kind. The freshness of the surface is due to the fact that the whole was once covered with white paint, which was later removed. The upper part has open-work carving, because there is a gallery behind it in the medieval fashion.

The panelling on the walls is of comparatively recent date. It was put up by the third Lord Braybrooke in the second quarter of the 19th century in place of the original which had decayed. In his book he speaks of the chimney-piece as if it were original work, but it contains some unusual features and may well have been made, or remade, in the time of the 7th Earl of Suffolk (1718-22), whose arms adorn the central panel. The figures in the recesses are not part of the original design. The ceiling is of plaster divided into many panels by wooden beams supported on brackets; in the panels are crests and cognisances of the Howard family. It is uncertain how much of this ceiling is genuine work of the 17th century.

The stone screen at the southern end of the Hall and the double staircase of stone with gilt iron balustrade is attributed to Vanbrugh. If, as seems likely, the cipher below the coronet in the balustrade is that of Charles William (C.W.), the 7th Earl of Suffolk, then this alteration must have been initiated, if not actually completed, before 1722. It seems, however, that the stair has been altered somewhat since Vanbrugh's day. The plaster ceiling above the staircase is Jacobean in general style, but the curves of the strapwork closely resemble those of the ironwork in the balustrade. It is, therefore, most likely that the ceiling also is the work of Vanbrugh, working in the Jacobean manner, no doubt under instruction from his noble client. Similarly the ornamental detail on the stone screen is not that of its period, and is scarcely distinguishable from genuine early 17th-century detail in the now filled arcade on the south side of the south wing. This conscious copying of the old style is typical of Audley End, and displays the persistent desire of successive owners to pay tribute to their predecessors by embellishing the house in ways which were in keeping with the original work.

Notable among the objects of art in the Hall is a large 15th-century carving in pearwood of a scene from the life of a saint, probably of South German origin. The furniture includes two sets of chairs dating from the last years of the 17th century. Both sets have elaborately carved cresting and stretchers and turned side rails, the one set being upholstered with red velvet, the other having caned seats and backs. A French 16th-century cabinet, carved with fluted columns, lions masks and allegorical female figures, stands against the east wall of the Hall, whilst at the foot of the staircase there is a late 18th-century mahogany long-case clock by Edward Harrison of Warrington, the face being enriched above the dial with *verre églomisé* decoration. A curious feature of the Hall is a miniature copy in plaster of the celebrated classical marble group of the Farnese Bull from the Naples Museum. This rests on a richly carved marble plinth copied from one formerly in the Medici collection and was acquired for Audley End at the sale of Robert Adam's effects in 1818. The silk heraldic banners, now much tattered, hanging in the Hall are emblazoned with bearings of the different families who have owned Audley End. The three guidons and three standards embroidered in silver and crimson on a blue ground (now faded to white) which hang below are those of the first troop of Horse Grenadier Guards of which Sir John Griffin Griffin was Captain and later Colonel between 1766 and 1798.

The row of eight Cornwallis and Townshend portraits high on the east wall came from Brome Hall in Suffolk at the death of the second Marquess Cornwallis in 1823. Jane, Lady Braybrooke, eldest of his five daughters, inherited a share of the Cornwallis property including the pictures here, the bust of the first Marquess by Bacon in the drawing-room, his portrait in the dining-room and the family portraits in the picture gallery. The Howards are represented by Lord Audley's daughter Margaret, Duchess of Norfolk, by Hans Eworth (11), her husband the fourth Duke (18) and their grand-daughter the infamous Frances Howard, Countess of Essex and Somerset (19), whose trial and conviction for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury is a *cause célèbre* of the 17th century. The Nevilles of Billingbear are shown by portraits of Sir Henry Neville the ambassador (15), his wife Anne Killigrew (38) and their son Henry (16); there is also the whole length of Edward VI (9) which was seen at Billingbear by George Vertue in 1730. The royal tenure of Audley End is shown by the portraits of Charles II on the staircase (37), James II in the passage (6) and of William and Mary, who have two small Lely school portraits (27 and 29) in the Hall; there is also one of William after Kneller on the staircase (33) and one of Mary by Van der Vaart in the dining-room (16).

Staircase

On the staircase hangs a small but interesting portrait of Lord Sandwich (31) who was killed at the Battle of Solebay in 1672. It was painted by de Critz for Samuel Pepys and is mentioned in Pepys's Diary for 22nd October, 1660. The original is by Lely and belongs to Lord Sandwich. The large whole-length of a cavalier (35) is of Colonel Sir Thomas Lunsford, who married Catherine, daughter of Sir Henry Neville.

Saloon

Before the erection of the stone stair from the Hall, this fine room must have been entered either from a stair close to its eastern side or from a room to the north which was destroyed when the stone stair was made. A painted inscription in the northernmost panel of the west wall, whilst epitomising the history of the families from time to time dwelling in the house, states that, apart from the ceiling, the room was refitted by Sir John Griffin Griffin, later Lord Howard de Walden and first Lord Braybrooke. The date of this work, 1785, appears over the north door. The decoration and the general appearance of the room may be attributed to this time, but the ceiling and chimney-piece belong to the original early 17th-century house. The latter is a very elaborate example of its kind, but none of the paint is original, nor is the marble fireplace surround. The ceiling, like that of the Hall, is divided into compartments, but here the divisions are marked by pendants and strap-work, and the decorative figures consist of ships, mermaids, whales, sea-birds and fabulous sea monsters. It is a most interesting collection, which makes the ceiling one of the most notable of its kind. The frieze of quatrefoils enclosing masks, which runs round the walls between cornice and ceiling, appears to be of later date (i.e. 1785). All the panelling dates from 1785, and it will be noticed that, in spite of the general appearance of Classical design, the clustered capitals at the level of the heads of the painted figures are distinctly Gothic in shape. The paintings themselves, by various artists including Biagio Rebecca and Enoch Seeman, represent the predecessors in title of Sir John Griffin Griffin, who appears in the central panel of the west wall. The series was placed in position, as he says in his inscription, 'to commemorate those through whom with gratitude he holds these possessions'. Some came from Dingley Hall in Northamptonshire, then the family seat of the Griffins. The Rebeccas were commissioned by Sir John originally for the Breakfast Room and, except for his own portrait(14), were copied from appropriate originals. The portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk actually bear no resemblance to the

persons concerned, being pirated from a picture at Sherborne Castle, *The Visit of Queen Elizabeth to Blackfriars in 1600*.

The two side-tables, supporting some fine pieces of Wedgwood pottery, which flank the entrance door to the Saloon, are of especial interest. Their tops, elaborately veneered in the French taste, are supported on fluted legs painted green and gold. These tables were designed for the Summer Dining Room by Robert Adam and are probably the work of Langlois, a French *ébéniste* working in London between 1760 and 1780, who executed a very similar pair of tables for Syon House to Robert Adam's designs about 1763. Beside each table stands a chair of walnut, the back elaborately carved in the style associated with Daniel Marot; they are probably Dutch and date from the end of the 17th century. The four carved pedestals, two of which support fine French candelabra of the Empire period, were originally designed, like the side-tables, for the Summer Dining Room. In the centre of the room is a Chinese Chippendale tea-table of mahogany, the top surrounded by a pierced gallery and resting on legs of cluster column form. The Chinese taste reappears in six armchairs, the backs and arms of which are of 'Chinese railing' lattice work. At the south end of the room is a Hepplewhite games table and a large French writing table in the Louis XV style.

Drawing Room

This is a creation of the second or third Lord Braybrooke, and had recently been completed when the latter published his account of Audley End in 1836. It was an enlargement of an existing room which had a fireplace in a different position. The chimney-piece appears to be of the early 17th century, but, if so, it must have been moved from elsewhere when the alteration was made, and painted in conformity with the new style of decoration. The plaster cornice and ceiling were new in 1836, but their general style is that of the early 17th century, and illustrate once more the family's care to ensure that all new work should be in harmony with the old.

At each end of the Drawing Room is a large Boulle display case in which examples of English and Continental porcelain are exhibited. The room contains several other pieces of French furniture, notably two small Louis XV tables and two Boulle bracket clocks, one of which, of the type known as *religieuse*, has a movement signed by Balthazer, one of a long dynasty of Parisian clockmakers. The most important piece of English furniture in the Drawing Room is a satinwood reading desk of unusual kidney-shaped design which was presented to R. N. Neville by Queen Charlotte in 1780. A large gilt stool



Part of the Ceiling of the Saloon, Audley End



*The First Lord Braybrooke:
from a painting in the South Library*
(by permission of the Honourable Robin Neville)

with scrolled ends which stands in a window embrasure was designed for the house by Robert Adam. On the bookcase against the north wall of the room is Chantrey's sketch model for a statue of Sir Charles Forbes.

The paintings here are mostly 17th-century Dutch and Italian cabinet pictures, probably collected by Sir John Griffin. Some of them are of very high quality, especially the square Canaletto of Venice (28).

South Library

This room also dates from *c.* 1825-30. The cornice and ceiling are similar to those of the Drawing Room, but the chimney-piece is of earlier date, *c.* 1765-80. It is the sole reminder in the room of the time when it was a bedroom, i.e. before the early 19th century alterations, which changed the uses of the rooms on the ground and first floors of this wing. The bookcases were made at the time of these alterations, and there will be seen on the shelves many of the books, in distinctive binding, red and gold chequers, which were the property of Sir Griffin Griffin, first Lord Braybrooke. Books in this binding are shown in a drawing of the old Library, which was on the ground floor. The drawing, probably by Robert Adam, *c.* 1765, shows shelves filled with such books. No doubt it was a design for a complete library, with the books all alike in a special binding; but with the extension of the library, when it was removed to the first floor and rearranged in categories, the distinctive books were dispersed. They may be seen, here and there, singly and in groups, both in this room and in the main Library. The portrait over the fireplace is of Sir John Griffin Griffin seated in his tent in General's uniform. His first and second wives in the guise of sybils, poet and musician, are over the two doors. All three were painted by Benjamin West in about 1771.

The most important piece of furniture in this room is a small carved wooden armchair of the form known as *caquetoire*. It is of French 16th-century workmanship with later restorations, and was at one time in the possession of the poet Alexander Pope, who gave it to his nurse during his last illness. It was later acquired by the Reverend Thomas Ashby who presented it to Lord Braybrooke in 1844. Against the bookcase is an armchair, dating from the early years of the 19th century, which opens to form a set of library steps.

Library

This sumptuous room was made between 1820 and 1825 by throwing two rooms into one and lowering the floor which had been 4 ft above

that of the adjacent room. The chimney-piece is of the early 17th century, but it is known that it was brought from a room in the north wing when the Library was made. It was then painted in white and gold, to match the rest of the decoration of the room. The arms are those of the third Lord Braybrooke. The decoration closely resembles that of 1785 in the Saloon, since in both cases pains have been taken to imitate an older fashion; but they are not identical, as a careful comparison of the lions' heads on the pilasters in the two rooms will show. The plaster ceiling and cornice have features which are repeated in several of the adjacent rooms, showing that most of them were part of one scheme of alteration. The books are a fine collection of Classical, foreign and English books, mainly of the 18th century, but with additions of later volumes on archaeology and ornithology, which were the especial delight of the third and fourth Lords Braybrooke. The books formerly in the old Library on the ground floor may be identified by their distinctive scarlet and gold chequered binding.

The two sofas and eight armchairs with frames of green and gold were designed by Robert Adam like the Adam side-tables in the Saloon the supports of which they match. They were no doubt moved here when the Library was built in 1820-5. This room also contains several fine pieces of French furniture, notably a Louis XVI library-table stamped by the *ébéniste* P. C. Montigny (1734-1800) and a small Louis XV writing table of rosewood and kingwood; a larger writing table of Louis XV style, veneered with tulipwood and kingwood, stands in the window embrasure.

Dining Room

Like the Library, this room was formed out of two smaller rooms during the alterations of 1820-5. The original dividing wall still partly exists and may be seen. The chimney-pieces are of early 17th-century type, and at first sight seem to be genuine, apart from the gold and white paint and the Royal Arms. They are, however, to all intents and purposes identical in decoration, and such an occurrence would be most unlikely in the 17th century. One at least of them must be a copy. The arms on them are of the kings who owned Audley End in the late 17th century. The plaster ceiling of the western part of this room is like that of the adjacent Library, but that of the eastern part is of a somewhat different type. It is possible that it is of earlier date, because the room was formerly an important bedroom, which may well have had such an embellishment.

The massive mahogany sideboards no doubt date from the period when this room was designed, and the dining table, though of a

rather earlier style, may have been made at the same time. Twelve assorted dining chairs, some of Chippendale and others of Adam design, stand around the walls. The mahogany side-table, carved with flutes and paterae, must have been moved here from the Adam suite of rooms. The small coromandel wood writing table resting on X-shaped supports which stands in a window recess is of Regency design, one of a pair, the companion being in the Picture Gallery. They date from about 1800.

Perhaps the best pictures in the house are in this room, which is dominated by Pine's portrait of King George II (1) and Beechey's Marquess Cornwallis (9). Among the others are Sir Charles Lucas by Dobson (3), the Earl of Pembroke (5) (formerly thought to have been James I's favourite, the Earl of Somerset), a magnificent double portrait by Lely of himself and Hugh May (8) and an interesting small portrait of Mary II by Jan van der Vaart (16).

Staircases and Picture Gallery

The staircases both belong to the original house of the early 17th century. It is not certain that they are in their original positions, and it is probable that the lowest flight of the southern stair has been altered or renewed, but they still represent good, if not the grandest, work of its kind and period.

The gallery between them in its present form is not old. It was built over an open arcade shortly before 1765. The arcade was filled in as it is at present about a hundred years later, and it is probable that the decoration of the gallery, including the chimney-piece in the manner of the early 17th century, dates from this time.

On the landing outside the Picture Gallery is a good series by Lely of Lord Grey of Werke's family, Catherine Grey (4) married Richard Neville of Billingbear and is the ancestress of the Barons Braybrooke.

The Picture Gallery contains the fine group of Cornwallis portraits brought here by Jane Cornwallis in 1819 on her marriage to the third Lord Braybrooke. The best amongst them is the striking 16th-century portrait of Sir Thomas Cornwallis, attributed to Queen Elizabeth's sergeant-painter, George Gower (3), and the Restoration painting of the second Lord Cornwallis by J. M. Wright (5).

On the north landing are two Reynolds portraits of the Earl of Portsmouth (2), whose wife, Elizabeth, successfully claimed a share of the Audley End estate after the death of the tenth Earl of Suffolk, and of Admiral Matthew Whitwell, Sir John Griffin's brother (1). They are both in fine contemporary frames.

Passage

The passage behind the hall has two gouache paintings by William Evans of Montem Day at Eton in 1841 and two views by Jan Griffier of Hurstbourne Priors, built by Lord Portsmouth in the 1730s. An enormous view, also by Griffier, of Billingbear Park in 1738 hangs at the end of the passage.

The 'Adam' Rooms

When Sir John Griffin Griffin inherited Audley End in 1762, he set himself to complete the alterations begun by his aunt, Lady Portsmouth, and to embellish it in a fitting manner. At that time he seems not to have been so fully persuaded as he was later of the desirability of having decoration in harmony with the old parts of the house. If one may judge from the drawings still in the house, he commissioned Robert Adam to decorate a complete suite of rooms on the ground floor. Much of this decoration is intact, and those who prefer a new creation to a conscious imitation of the old may well feel that these are the most pleasing rooms in the house.

The room in the south-western corner of the house was then the dining-room, but is now called the Billiard Room. Its decoration is in Adam style, but of quite a simple character.

In place of the three rooms along the south wing, now respectively styled Dressing Room, Bedroom and Sitting Room, were then a narrow vestibule and two drawing-rooms. In the Bedroom, now shorter than when built, as shown by the truncation of the ceiling pattern, it will be noticed that the great bed conceals much of the finely decorated ceiling. Clearly it was not intended for this room. In the late 18th century the bed must have been in one of the rooms above, which were then bedrooms, the alteration in use being made between 1825 and 1836.

When the house was built early in the 17th century these rooms did not exist. There was instead an open walk, bounded on the south by a colonnade, the appearance of which may still be seen from the outside. It is not known for certain when this arcade was filled, in order to create these rooms, but it may well have been during the time of the tenth and last Earl of Suffolk, who died in 1745. Their decoration, done twenty years later, is in the best style of the period and corresponds closely with drawings still in the library, one of which is signed by Robert Adam. This applies not only to the elaborately designed and painted ceiling of the Bedroom and the whole riot of decoration in the Sitting Room, but also to the architraves of the doorways, the fire-places and smaller fittings. The accounts of work done at this time

include a receipt for fifty guineas, signed by Biagio Rebecca and dated September 28th, 1769, for painting in the Sitting Room. In the Sitting Room hangs a vellum patent dated at Greenwich, May 1634, and probably the work of Edward Norgate. It is a grant of an augmentation of arms by Charles I to the Earl of Stirling and is decorated with the landing on the coast of Nova Scotia and various hunting and hawking scenes there.

At the eastern end of this wing was once the Library. It had bookshelves and other decoration in the same (Adam) style, and, if one may judge from a drawing of it, still existing, it was perhaps the most pleasing of all these rooms. The main colour seems to have been mauve or violet, and all the books had scarlet and gold chequer binding. When the books were moved upstairs to the new Library between 1820 and 1825, this room, now called the Old Library, came to be used for other purposes. It has since been divided by partitions into three rooms and a corridor, some original fittings being reset in new positions.

Much of the furniture intended for the Adam suite of rooms is now scattered throughout the house. Robert Adam's own designs for many of the pieces are to be found in a scrapbook in the Library.

The walls throughout the Adam suite are hung with rose-coloured Spitalfields silk, woven with a floral design in gold. Amongst the furniture in the Dressing Room is a fine early 18th-century card-table, veneered with parquetry of a striped design in laburnum wood, and a large English chest of drawers of mahogany, richly mounted with gilt bronze in the Louis XV style, dating from about 1750. Three more of these chests of drawers are to be found in the adjacent Bedroom, the most notable feature of which is a large canopied bed hung with silk, originally blue but now faded. It is richly embroidered with floral patterns on the valances. The canopy is elaborately carved with military trophies, heraldic devices, etc. The Alcove Room contains a sofa of gilt wood with scrolled ends from the same suite, designed by Robert Adam, as the stool already mentioned in the Drawing Room, several more of which are found in the Bedroom. It is upholstered in silk of striped and floral design which is also used for the window curtains. Between the windows is a demi-lune side-table of mahogany and gilded gesso into the front of which is set a panel painted in the style usually associated with Angelica Kauffman, but, in this instance, probably the work of Biagio Rebecca. A somewhat similar but smaller side-table of Adam design stands beneath a pier glass in the Bedroom. The table of gilded gesso in the centre of the room is English, and dates from about 1720, and the mahogany chest of drawers with gilt bronze mounts in the French taste is likewise English and of mid 18th-century date. Neither can have formed part of the original furnishings of the Adam suite.

Dressing Room and Bedroom

There is little furniture of importance in either of these rooms, though visitors may find the circular pedestal table interesting because of the unusual variety of woods used in the parquetry of the top. The William and Mary chest between the windows is veneered with walnut in an 'oyster' pattern, but has suffered grievously from long exposure to the sun. In the bedroom is a large canopied bed of mahogany, the canopy and hangings of which are of red damask. Beside the door is a small ebony cabinet of Dutch manufacture with drawer-fronts painted with landscapes.

Chapel

Before entering the Chapel, visitors will note the large elaborately furnished Georgian dolls house which stands in the staircase lobby, as well as the Reynolds portraits set in two remarkable carved rococo picture frames. The Chapel is a notable example of late 18th-century Gothic architecture, completed by 1786, with fittings to match, such as the set of unusual Chippendale chairs in the lobby in the Gothic taste, painted cream, and emblazoned with the Griffin arms. An unpainted olive wood lectern, of the same date as the chairs, stands in the body of the Chapel and Charles Rossi's original model for the tomb of Lord Cornwallis in St. Paul's Cathedral which was presented to Lord Braybrooke by Lady Mary Singleton is set against the east wall. The windows were, both of them, interesting examples of English 18th-century painted glass, the work of the well-known York glass painter, W. Peckett, in 1797; they were designed by Biagio Rebecca. Paintings of both still exist, and the fragments of the north window, recently found in the stables, have been pieced together. It is hoped to replace this window glass soon in a gothic frame. The linoleum on the floor is new, but it closely resembles in design and appearance the original floor covering of kamptulicon or oiled cloth, of which portions remain underneath.

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